



March 14, 2022

Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-240-0440; Email: envtestimony@cga.ct.gov

Re: SUPPORT HB 235, AN ACT CONCERNING VETERINARY REPORTING OF DOGS USED IN ANIMAL FIGHTING

Dear Co-Chair Cohen, Co-Chair Gresko, Vice Chair Slap, Vice Chair Palm, Ranking Member Miner, Ranking Member Harding, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

On behalf of the Connecticut-based supporters of The Humane Society of the United States, the largest animal protection organization in the country, please accept this public hearing testimony in SUPPORT of SB 235, which would require veterinarians to report to local law enforcement when they treat dogs they believe have been used in animal fighting. This bill grants veterinarians immunity from civil liability for such reporting.

Animal fighting is an extreme example of animal cruelty, but sadly, one that occurs with alarming frequency – including here in Connecticut.^{1,2} Dogfighting glamorizes violence and turns it into entertainment, often with tens of thousands of dollars on the line. Dogs used in these events often die of blood loss, shock, dehydration, exhaustion, or infection hours or even days after the fight. Organized animal fighting can be associated with other criminal activities, such as gambling, illegal firearm possession, drug abuse and dealing, and other violent crime. Dogfighting is not a spur-of-the-moment act; it is a premeditated and cruel practice that uses specialized equipment to train their animals for fighting and to stage fights. SB 235 would help law enforcement sooner identify these cruel operations.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours truly,

Annie Hornish
Connecticut State Director
The Humane Society of the United States
Cell: (860) 966-1819
Email: ahornish@humanesociety.org

¹ A large, multi-state dog fighting sting occurred in October 2021, with operations identified in Orange and Meriden, CT: <https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-br-ct-dogfighting-dogs-20211021-etiquess7kbh7zbokcm3ev3cjqa-story.html>

² WTNH, Nov. 2, 2021 “A look inside the world of dogfighting in CT”: <https://www.wtnh.com/news/connecticut/new-haven/a-look-inside-the-world-of-dogfighting-in-ct>